

# THE MILITANT

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Workers need labor party, say socialist candidates

BY ANGEL LARISCY

NEW YORK—"Working people need to break from the Democrats and Republicans and form our own party—a labor party," said Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York governor, while campaigning at a meeting entitled "Which Way for the Working Class? Elections 2010 and Beyond," held at Cooper Union here on September 24.

The event, sponsored by Working

America and the AFL-CIO, featured AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka and *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert, along with other guest speakers.

"I think the country is headed into a dark time," Herbert said in his remarks. "The scale of remedies Obama and the Democrats have come up with are not sufficient to the size of the problem." At the same time, he later

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## Protests denounce FBI raids in Chicago and Minneapolis



AP/Paul Beaty

Protest in Chicago September 27 against FBI raids and seizure of property at homes of antiwar and union activists. Speaking at left is Stephanie Weiner, whose home was searched by FBI.

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

CHICAGO—Chanting "FBI raids have got to go!" and "Freedom of speech under attack!" more than 350 people rallied in front of the FBI headquarters here September 27 to protest raids three days earlier on the homes of anti-war, union, and other political activists in Chicago and Minneapolis.

Some 150 people also protested the raids outside the FBI offices in Minneapolis, and demonstrations took

place in more than a dozen other cities.

The FBI seized computers, cell phones, passports, and other documents and issued subpoenas to 11 people in Minnesota, Illinois, and Michigan to appear before a federal grand jury in Chicago.

FBI spokesman Steve Warfield said the raids were part of an "ongoing Joint Terrorism Task Force investigation into activities concerning the material support of terrorism."

Among those whose homes were raided in Chicago were antiwar and union activists Joe Iosbaker and Stephanie Weiner, and Hatem Abudayyeh, executive director of the Arab American Action Network.

Walter Soria, 20, who came with a group of friends to the Chicago picket, said, "We came because we don't like this kind of thing. The government abuses its power." Richard Berg, former president of Teamsters Local 743, told the *Militant* that "this is an attack on the entire labor movement. Joe and Stephanie have been trade unionists for many years."

Iosbaker, a staff member at the University of Illinois at Chicago and chief steward for Service Employees International Union Local 73, and Weiner,

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## I've never seen a history like this'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The eight-week drive to sell 1,800 copies of the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and 2,100 *Militant* subscriptions is through the second week. Supporters of the *Militant* have so far sold 318 copies of the book and 412 subscriptions.

Socialists in the New York area have sold seven *Workers Power* books and 13 new or renewal subscriptions

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## Black farmers protest gov't discrimination

### Denied loans but determined to farm



Militant/Nick Gruenberg

Black farmers and supporters in Washington September 23 protest government discrimination. Action was initiated by John Boyd, driving tractor, and Robert Binion, with megaphone.

BY SUSAN LAMONT

WASHINGTON—Five dozen Black farmers and their supporters marched from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to the Capitol September 23, demanding equal treatment and government compensation to settle a long-standing discrimination lawsuit.

Farmers came from Alabama, Mis-

issippi, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, Kansas, and North Carolina, and were joined by supporters from the Washington area. The action was initiated by John Boyd, president of the National Black Farmers Association (NBFA), and Robert Binion, a 61-year-old peach farmer from Clanton, Alabama. Also participating in the pro-

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## Washington launches Afghan assault, raids Pakistan border

BY CINDY JAQUITH

U.S.-led troops began active combat in districts outside the Afghan city of Kandahar September 25, with the goal of driving Taliban forces out of what has been a major stronghold for them. Meanwhile, NATO helicopters entered Pakistani airspace in raids that killed some 70 people.

The imperialist offensive in Kandahar Province was originally slated to

begin in June. It was delayed after a similar operation in February in Marjah in neighboring Helmand Province was not the "catastrophic success" the U.S. forces had originally proclaimed. In August U.S. Marine helicopters still wouldn't land in Marjah's district center because of Taliban fire. In late August U.S. troops helped push the Taliban out of the Mehrlaj area south-

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## 3 White House economic aides quit amid 'stimulus' failures

BY SETH GALINSKY

As it becomes increasingly clear that the White House's so-called economic stimulus measures cannot slow the unfolding economic depression, three key members of Barack Obama's financial team have resigned. The resignations highlight the lack of confidence within the U.S. ruling class of finding a way out of the crisis, in spite of the recent announcement that the recession officially ended in June 2009.

Lawrence Summers, head of the National Economic Council and one

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# Health-care ‘reform’ law takes ax to Medicare

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Medicare is on the chopping block in the health “reform” legislation that President Barack Obama signed into law in March.

Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Medicare payments to doctors and hospitals will be cut 30 percent over the next three years, according to the Annual Report of the Medicare Board of Trustees. As a result, more physicians and hospitals will stop taking Medicare patients.

Over the next 10 years the legislation projects cutting \$1.05 trillion from Medicare hospital insurance and doctor fees. The figure rises to nearly \$5 trillion over the next 20 years, according to a September 9 *Wall Street Journal* column by Peter Ferrar of the Institute for Policy Innovation and Larry Hunger, president of the Social Security Institute.

Private insurance Medicare Advantage programs, which pay some expenses that Medicare does not cover, will also be slashed. One-fourth of those eligible for Medicare have signed on to these insurance programs.

The new health law also empowers the Medicare Independent Payment Advisory Board to make additional cuts “that would become effective without any congressional action,” notes the *Journal* article.

Medicare was enacted as a result of victories won during the mobilizations for civil rights led by Black workers in the 1950s and 1960s. The program provides government subsidized health care for the elderly and permanently

disabled. Over the past several decades capitalist politicians have been steadily whittling away these social gains. The new projected cuts will slash much more. They also fit in with the president’s promise that the health “reform” law would actually lower the federal deficit.

Six months after the bill’s passage several of its provisions are taking effect. These include: children can stay on their parent’s plan until age 26; insurance companies are forbidden to deny coverage to children with pre-existing conditions; and new health plans must offer preventive services such as mammograms and colon cancer screenings without charging a deductible or copayment.

In response, many insurance companies are raising premium rates. Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon, for example, has announced a 17 percent increase for some policies.

Meanwhile, the number of workers filing for Social Security disability benefits has risen sharply, up 21 percent from 2008 to 2009, reported the *Washington Post*. The average age of new recipients is 49. Many workers

## Cuban 5 prisoner’s wife speaks in Canada



Militant/Rosemary Ray

TORONTO—Elizabeth Palmeiro, wife of Cuban Five prisoner Ramón La-bañino, and Jorge Soberón, consul general from the Cuban Consulate in Toronto, spoke here September 26 at a forum during a labor solidarity conference organized by Worker to Worker and the Canada-Cuba Labour Solidarity Network.

Palmeiro said, “I have come to Canada many times and I always see new faces, which means we are winning more support.” It will be the “pressure of world public opinion” that will win the five’s eventual freedom. “We know how political solidarity works because this is how Nelson Mandela was freed from jail and this is why the Puerto Rican nationalists were also freed.”

—ROSEMARY RAY

keep working despite injuries in order to hold onto their jobs. But with millions thrown out of work over the past several years, injured workers have a harder time getting hired. Some are

fighting for disability coverage in order to have an income. They receive health insurance through Medicare after being on the disability rolls for two years.

## Hazleton anti-immigrant ordinance struck down

BY JANET POST

PHILADELPHIA—A federal appeals court upheld a 2007 injunction against an anti-immigrant ordinance in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, September 9—a victory for all who mobilized in Hazleton and other cities against such attacks on immigrant workers.

Hazleton’s “Illegal Immigration Relief Act” would have denied business licenses to companies that hire undocumented immigrants. Landlords could have lost their licenses for “harboring” undocumented immigrants. Anyone 18 and older would have had to obtain a permit to rent, predicated in part on their immigration status.

The ordinance has been a rallying point for similar anti-immigrant measures in a number of other municipalities around the country.

“Federal law simply does not prohibit landlords from renting to persons who lack lawful immigration status,” wrote Chief Judge Theodore McKee. “Nor does federal law directly prohibit persons lacking lawful status from renting apartments.”

The ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit also noted,

“If Hazleton’s ordinance is permissible, then each and every state and locality would be free to implement similar schemes for investigating, prosecuting, and adjudicating whether an employer has employed unauthorized aliens.”

The lawsuit against the measures was filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the Community Justice Project. In response to the decision, Agapito Lopez, president of the Hazleton Area Latino Association and one of the original plaintiffs, said, “Justice has been done.”

The day of the ruling, Hazleton’s mayor, Louis Barletta, who is the Republican congressional candidate in the 11th District, announced that the city would appeal the judgment to the Supreme Court.

## THE MILITANT

### Socialist campaigns back workers’ fights

*Across the United States, candidates of the Socialist Workers Party are supporting fights by workers for better wages, safer working conditions, and an end to discrimination based on race, sex, or immigration status. Follow their campaigns in the ‘Militant.’*



Militant/Betsy Farley

Socialist candidate for Illinois governor, John Hawkins, talks with striking lumber workers in Yorkville, Illinois, August 26.

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‘Workers Power’ sales

Continued from front page in two plants where they work. At the protests organized by Black farmers September 21–23 in Washington, D.C., against racist treatment by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, farmers bought 11 copies of the book and 15 *Militant* subscriptions. “Many were especially interested in the section of *Workers Power* that describes the gains made by toilers in the South, led by Black freedmen, during Radical Reconstruction after the Civil War,” reported Chris Hoeppner.

Campaigning door-to-door Sunday in a working-class neighborhood in northwest Houston, Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress from the 18th District in Texas, met a young Black worker eager to buy *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. “I’ve never seen a history like this,” he told Warshell as he leafed through photos in the book. “In school they teach it was politicians who pushed through civil rights and gave us Social Security. This book is saying there’s a lot more to it.”

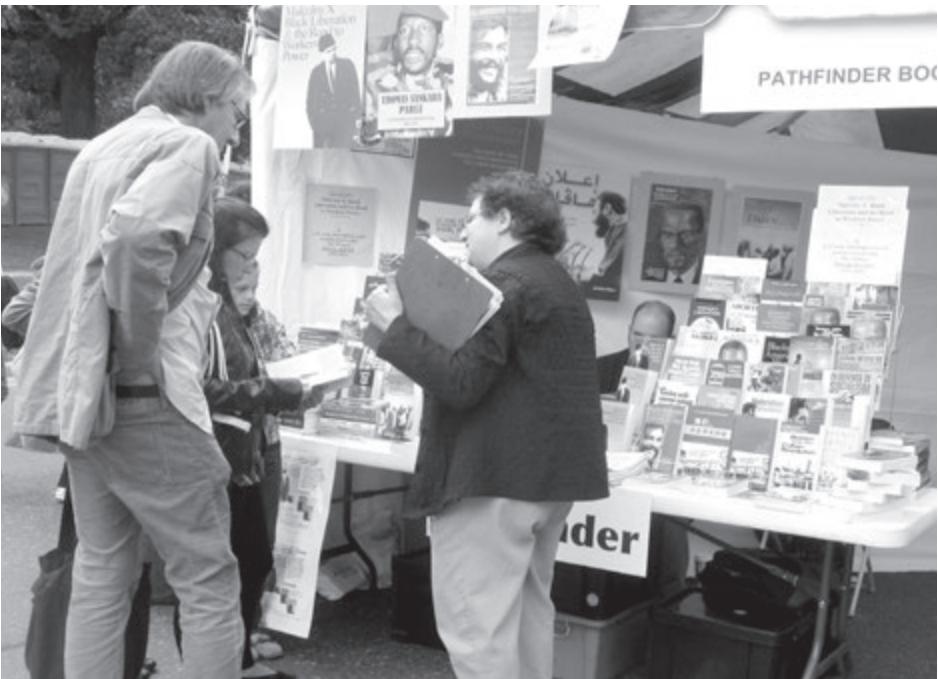
In Boston, a student from Boston College contacted the socialist campaign to get involved. The next day she bought *Workers Power* and a *Militant* subscription after joining other campaign supporters to hear Laura Garza, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress from the 8th District in Massachusetts, speak at a Boston May Day Committee conference on the fight for immigrant rights.

At a September 23 protest in Paris against a government-sponsored bill to raise the retirement age, Mustapha, a young hospital worker originally from

Senegal, who bought the French-language edition, said he was particularly interested in the section of *Workers Power* on the difference between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, reported Derek Jeffers.

Twenty-one other workers at this and a similar protest two weeks earlier also purchased *Workers Power*. In addition, 46 copies of the book were sold at the annual Fête de l’Humanité book fair September 10–12.

*Workers Power* and other Pathfinder literature was also well received at the annual Word on the Street festival in Toronto September 26. Ten copies of the book and five *Militant* subscriptions were sold, along with more than \$400 in other Pathfinder literature.



Pathfinder Press booth at Word on the Street festival in Toronto, September 26. Militant/John Steele

SWP candidates: ‘Workers need labor party’

Continued from front page told the audience, “I can’t impress upon people how important it is to vote.”

“We need to build an economy that works for everyone,” said Trumka. “People are frustrated and angry and confused about who is to blame. Wall Street is to blame, not Obama.”

The meeting was not organized to allow participation from the more than 400 in attendance. Instead, panelists chose questions from written cards.

“In my opinion the speakers offered no answers, just get out the vote for Democrats,” Gerald Bollinger, a former member of Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ, told Fein. “There was nothing on how to take action.”

“The labor movement needs to take action,” agreed Fein. “We need to mobilize in the face of unrelenting assaults by the employers and their parties—the Republicans and Democrats.”

Fein pointed to some of the immediate measures the SWP is calling for along with demands that the labor movement needs to champion: unemployment payments for as long as a worker is without a job; a massive federal public works program to put millions to work; shorten the workweek with no cut in pay to provide more jobs; legalization of all undocumented workers.

“The billionaire families in this country constitute a dictatorship of capital; we need to replace it with workers power,” said Fein, as Bollinger purchased a copy of the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, by Jack Barnes, and signed up for a *Militant* subscription.

A promotional article for the September 24 meeting raised the question, “Will the Glenn Becks and Sarah Palins of the world exploit that justifiable anger at an economy that isn’t working for all into a November election win? Or, will working-class voters see that a right-wing and Republican victory is an open door to the economic policies of the past that drove the economy in the ditch?”

In response to the discussion about why some workers and middle-class layers are attracted to the tea party and its candidates, Herbert said, “What drives the tea party is the economic crisis which faces the country. It’s not racism.”

Campaigning among the crowd, Sarah Robinett, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New York, spoke to a man who used to work on Wall Street for Bank of America. He was laid off and now drives an Access-a-Ride van for those who are not able to take mass transportation. “This meeting didn’t have anything to offer,” he said.

“Many people turning out for events like the Glenn Beck rally have taken

blows due to the economic crisis and are looking for answers. They don’t see any strong working-class voice from the labor movement,” Robinett said. “You can’t make capitalism work better. The Socialist Workers Party campaign is about discussing how workers can organize to take power, and when we raise our ideas we find a response.”

“The answer is not to vote for the lesser evil,” Robinett told a member of the Transport Workers Union. “I recommend you campaign for the SWP, but more than that, the socialist candidates urge workers to campaign for a labor party based on a fighting union movement.”

SWP party-building fund for \$98,000 begins on schedule

BY LAURA GARZA

“We have set a larger goal than we have raised in a number of years,” said Steve Warshell, the director of the party-building fund for the Socialist Workers Party in Houston.

The fund runs from September 11 to November 9 with a goal of raising \$98,000 in contributions from people who want to aid the work of the SWP. After one week the national fund campaign is on target with more than \$12,600 sent in.

“We are confident many new people, including new coworkers, are going to contribute this time,” Warshell said.

He said organizers of the fund in Houston will be speaking to those who have been introduced to the party and are reading the *Militant* and bought the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, by Jack Barnes.

The fall campaign to raise \$98,000 for the work of the SWP is an oppor-

tunity to reach out broadly to win support for the party. All contributions, small and large, are important. At an SWP campaign table in the New York City neighborhood of Harlem last weekend, a woman who already had a subscription to the *Militant* decided to purchase the *Workers Power* book. She then donated \$5 to the fund.

Below is a list of fund-raising meetings featuring leaders of the party speaking on world politics and openings to build the SWP. If you’d like to contribute, see page 10 for a local address, or send a check or money order to SWP, 306 W. 37th St., New York, NY, 10018.

Party-building fund Sept. 11–Nov. 9

City	Quota	Paid	%
Des Moines	\$2,700	\$910	34%
Twin Cities	\$7,000	\$1,970	28%
Seattle	\$8,600	\$1,835	21%
San Francisco	\$13,500	\$1,800	13%
New York	\$20,000	\$2,500	13%
Washington	\$7,000	\$810	12%
Chicago	\$10,000	\$1,075	11%
Los Angeles	\$8000	\$775	10%
Boston	\$3600	\$270	8%
Atlanta	\$7,800	\$514	7%
Houston	\$3,000	\$100	3%
Miami	\$3,000	\$100	3%
Philadelphia	\$3,600	\$0	0%
Total	\$97,800	\$12,659	13%
Should be	\$98,000	\$12,250	13%

campaign to sell ‘Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power’ & ‘Militant’ Sept. 11–Nov. 9 (week 2)						
Country	‘Workers Power’ books			‘Militant’ subscriptions		
	quota	sold	%	quota	sold	%
UNITED STATES						
Washington	145	44	30%	125	46	37%
Des Moines	110	23	21%	125	21	17%
Atlanta	110	21	19%	140	30	21%
Twin Cities	100	19	19%	135	32	24%
Seattle	130	23	18%	140	14	10%
New York	375	53	14%	325	47	14%
Philadelphia	65	8	12%	75	22	29%
Miami	50	6	12%	65	12	18%
San Francisco	130	15	12%	155	27	17%
Chicago	130	13	10%	130	16	12%
Boston	45	4	9%	65	12	18%
Los Angeles	135	11	8%	120	22	18%
Houston	50	4	8%	50	9	18%
Total U.S.	1575	244	15%	1650	310	19%
UNITED KINGDOM						
Edinburgh	25	7	28%	35	11	31%
London	90	23	26%	90	23	26%
Total UK	115	30	26%	125	34	27%
Canada	62	25	40%	70	26	37%
New Zealand	25	5	20%	60	14	23%
Australia	25	5	20%	55	14	25%
Sweden	18	9	50%	22	14	64%
Total	1820	318	18%	1982	412	20%
Should be	1800	450	25%	2100	525	25%



# World Youth Festival to meet in South Africa

BY PAUL PEDERSON

LARNACA, Cyprus—Thousands of young people from around the world will gather in Johannesburg, South Africa, December 13–21 to participate in the 17th World Festival of Youth and Students. Built to draw young people together in the struggle against imperialism, this is the first time in the 65-year history of the festivals that it will be held in a country in sub-Saharan Africa.

Sponsored internationally by the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the local organization hosting this year's festival is the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL).

Organizations from more than 40 countries met in Cyprus September 11–14 to build and organize the event.

The main political themes of the upcoming festival will be opposition to the expansion of U.S. military forces in Africa through the African Command; support to the struggle of the Sahrawi people to end the occupation of Western Sahara by the Moroccan regime; the international campaign to win freedom for the Cuban Five; and activities dedicated to educating participants on the history of the battle to end white-minority rule in South Africa and Cuba's role in aiding liberation struggles in Southern Africa.

Weighty participation will come from the countries of Southern Africa. Organizations in Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe have pledged to send large delegations.

In previous decades, the majority of festivals took place in the former Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. The last four festivals, however, took place in Venezuela (2005), Algeria (2001), Cuba (1997), and North Korea (1989).

Hamdi Salek, a leader of the Ujsario, the youth wing of the Polisario Front from Western Sahara, addressed delegates at the meeting in Cyprus.

"We hope to bring a large delegation of Sahrawis, both those living in the refugee camps and in the occupied zone," Salek said.

The Polisario Front led the struggle to liberate Western Sahara from Spanish colonial rule in 1975 and then fought a 15-year war against the Moroccan regime, which invaded and sought to carve up Western Sahara with the backing of Madrid. Morocco still occupies two-

thirds of the northwest African nation. Many Sahrawis fled and today remain in refugee camps in Algeria.

Leira Sánchez of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba urged delegates to step up the international campaign to win freedom for the Cuban Five.

While the Cyprus meeting was taking place, these five Cuban revolutionaries marked their 12th year behind bars in U.S. federal prisons. The Cuban Five—Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González—were arrested by the U.S. government in 1998 while living in the United States monitoring the activities of counterrevolutionary groups in Miami that have a long history of armed assaults and sabotage against Cuba.

Their trial and sentencing were textbook examples of how U.S. courts are often used to conduct political frame-ups against working-class militants and others who oppose policies of the U.S. government. The five are serving sentences ranging from 15 years to double life in five separate federal prisons.

Sánchez said the festival will serve to spread the international campaign to win their freedom. She also invited delegates to come to Havana in April 2011 for the Third International Youth Congress in Solidarity with the Five Heroes.

## Africom and imperialism in Africa

One of the central themes of the festival will be the debate unfolding in Africa around the increasing efforts by Washington to build a larger U.S. military presence on the continent. In 2007 Washington established a military command to oversee the Pentagon's operations on the African continent. The command, known as Africom, is currently headquartered in Germany, after difficulty finding an African nation willing to let Washington establish a headquarters on African soil.

While the proposed focus is on the growing U.S. military footprint in Africa, the continuing role of the former European colonial powers in Africa was also underscored at the Cyprus meeting.



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Delegation of Ujsario, youth group of Polisario Front that leads national liberation struggle in Western Sahara, at opening of 16th World Festival of Youth and Students in Venezuela, 2005. Upcoming festival in South Africa will be first ever held in sub-Saharan Africa.

The failed 2004 coup attempt in Equatorial Guinea, instigated by British mercenaries, among whom the son of former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher was instrumental, was singled out by delegates as an example.

The nine-day event will begin with an opening ceremony in a stadium in Soweto, the township outside Johannesburg that became an organizing center for the battle to topple the apartheid regime. Each of the following five days will be dedicated to one of five regions of the world: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Day seven is organized under the theme of the struggle against racism, xenophobia, and discrimination.

Throughout the festival workshops and other events will highlight key questions facing those fighting against imperialism today—among them the struggle against the spreading wars in Central Asia and the Middle East, battles for national liberation, struggles for land, student movements, the struggle against unemployment, and the impact of the world economic crisis on workers and youth.

Mbali Hlophe, of the South African Students Congress, gave a report to the Cyprus meeting on the plans for the eighth day of the festival, which is dedi-

cated to South Africa.

Two conferences will be held in the morning for all festival participants, Hlophe said. One will be a conference sponsored by the ANCYL on the debate in South Africa over efforts to nationalize the mining industry.

The second conference will focus on the battle of Cuito Cuanavale, an historic turning point in the struggle against apartheid and for the independence of Angola and Namibia. In March 1988 tens of thousands of Cuban soldiers and Angolan freedom fighters imposed a crushing defeat on the military forces of the apartheid regime in South Africa. The battle was the culmination of 15 years of fighting against repeated efforts by the South African forces to extend Pretoria's domination throughout Southern Africa.

Following the two conferences, delegates will visit sites where important milestones in the struggle against apartheid were marked.

In the United States a National Preparatory Committee for the youth festival will be established in the coming weeks and will begin accepting applications for those interested in participating. Anyone interested in taking part can contact [youngsocialists@mac.com](mailto:youngsocialists@mac.com) for more information.

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October 11, 1985

"Boycott South Africa!"  
"Free Nelson Mandela"

These will be two prominent chants at the upcoming anti-apartheid protests in more than 20 cities and on over 100 college campuses October 11 and 12.

Every progressive-minded person and organization should join these solidarity actions with the oppressed South African majority. It is through such mass protests that the demand for a total U.S. political, economic, and diplomatic break with the racist apartheid rulers will have the broadest impact.

These protests have won the support of scores of national and local trade unions, Black rights groups, antiwar and Central America solidarity organizations, Chicano and Puerto Rican groups, and hundreds of student organizations.



October 10, 1960

The withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Guantanamo Bay in Cuba was urged by Farrell Dobbs in a nationwide telecast Oct. 1. The Socialist Workers presidential candidate branded the maintenance of the naval base there as an example of "gunboat imperialism" and declared that the U.S. should get out of Guantanamo, as the "most obvious first step to take on the road to peace."

The declaration by Dobbs coincided with ominous new State Department moves against Cuba. On Sept. 30 the Department "advised" U.S. nationals in Cuba to send their wives and children home.

With the overwhelming majority of the Cuban people solidly behind their revolutionary government, even the most hostile observers concede that there is scant prospect of civil strife there.



October 12, 1935

AKRON, Ohio, Oct. 8—A titanic struggle by Wall Street interests for monopoly control of the rubber industry began openly this week, thus confronting the newly-formed United Rubber Workers of America with the severest challenge to protect the workers that the unions ever faced.

For the price of this war between the capitalists will be thrown on the workers through wage cuts unless the unions can muster sufficient strength to stop this move.

The battle which will take the main form of ruthless tire price slashes to drive other competitors into bankruptcy.

Firestone tried a wage cut in an important department but threat of a spontaneous strike stopped this quickly.



# Communist League campaigns in Auckland

BY MIKE TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—"The Communist League campaign points to the need for working people to act in our own interests," said Annalucia Vermunt, Communist League candidate for mayor of Auckland. "Ultimately that means taking power out of the hands of the capitalist class and we as working people organizing society to meet our needs."

Vermunt was speaking to a student meeting at the University of Auckland September 22 featuring five mayoral contenders. There are 21 candidates running for mayor of the city.

"What will you do about low pay and protecting workers' rights?" one of the participants in the meeting asked Vermunt, who is a union member and a meat worker.

"We need to transform our unions to fight for decent wages and conditions," Vermunt responded. "I support the union campaign to raise the minimum wage, and I am also part of a fight on the job to raise wages."

As well as running for mayor, Vermunt is standing for the city council along with Communist League running mate Patrick Brown.

"A central plank of the communist campaign is to demand jobs for all," Vermunt said. She noted that when a new supermarket opened in August, 2,700 people applied for 150 jobs. "We demand shorten the workweek with no loss in pay to share the available work. We call for a public works program to create jobs and build housing, schools, hospitals, transport, child care, and other facilities that working people need."

Official unemployment in New Zealand is around 7 percent. However, the total number of jobless, including underemployed, is more than double that figure. Among Maori, Pacific Islanders,

and Asians the unemployment rate is three to four times higher.

Vermunt also spoke at candidates' meetings organized by the National Council of Women September 3, and the Ethnic Council September 26.

The *New Zealand Herald*, Auckland's main daily, ran an article on the communist election campaign September 10. It reported Brown saying the Communist League campaign could not be separated from the fight for the working class. Brown and Vermunt, it said, "are seasoned political campaigners."

An election supplement printed in the *Herald* September 14 includes the candidates' profiles. This is reproduced on the paper's Web site.



Militant/Felicity Coggan  
Annalucia Vermunt, Communist League candidate for mayor of Auckland, New Zealand, addresses student meeting at University of Auckland September 22.

## Socialists: End spying and disruption!

*The following statement was released September 27 by Diana Newberry, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Minnesota, and John Hawkins, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Illinois.*

The Socialist Workers campaign calls on workers, farmers, and all defenders of democratic rights to speak out against the September 24 FBI raids carried out in Minneapolis, Chicago, and other cities.

The break-in at the office of the Anti-War Committee and homes of activists in Minneapolis and Chicago should be condemned by all supporters of political rights. This assault on the First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and association is a threat to labor unions, Black and Latino rights organizations, and to all working people.

For more than a decade the U.S. government has been laying the basis for expanding an offensive against the democratic rights of working people to speak

out and to organize, anticipating that workers will begin to rebel against the conditions of the capitalist economic crisis. This crisis has now arrived.

Working people in the United States face a sharp assault by the bosses against our wages and working conditions. We are living through an escalation of the U.S. war in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The government is expanding its use of wiretaps, informants, and frame-ups.

The FBI has a long history of intimidating and disrupting the struggles of working people attempting to defend themselves against the ruling rich. The FBI has carried out numerous violent acts against the civil rights movement, and has consistently targeted the labor movement; protests against U.S. wars abroad; the struggles of Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Native Ameri-



Militant/Ellen Brickley  
Diana Newberry, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Minnesota, campaigning at State Fair.

cans, and other oppressed nationalities; and the fight for women's rights.

The recent raids also come as the FBI is conducting a major national probe against the Somali community. For the past two years, the cop agency has raided their homes and businesses, and arrested and intimidated many in the Somali community. A number have been indicted in grand jury investigations. The FBI raids are being used to legitimize the expansion of spying and disruption against fighters for immigrant rights, the labor movement, the Black struggle, socialist organizations, and other working-class movements.

We must oppose the campaign by the U.S. government—Democrats and Republicans alike—to curb workers' constitutionally guaranteed rights for political organization and activity, and to legitimize use of the U.S. troops abroad.

The first two years of the Barack Obama administration have been marked by stepped-up bipartisan efforts to expand the powers of the FBI and other intelligence agencies in order to conduct spying and disruption operations, carry out arbitrary search and seizures, and round up immigrants. A new expanded Patriot Act signed into law by President Obama earlier this year gives the government greater powers to convict anyone who "harbors terrorists" or raises funds for organizations the U.S. government considers terrorist.

We urge workers, farmers and all defenders of democratic rights to join us in demanding: Stop the FBI raids! Return all materials confiscated by the FBI! Halt the federal grand jury investigations! Repeal the Patriot Act; End all government wiretapping, spying, and disruption campaigns!

## Protests denounce FBI raids against activists

Continued from front page

a professor at Wilbur Wright College, have been served subpoenas to appear before a grand jury on October 5. Tom Burke of the Colombia Action

Network was also subpoenaed.

According to the *Chicago Tribune* the subpoenas are for records detailing their travel to the Middle East and South America as well as for donations to Abudayyeh's group and two groups on the State Department's list of terrorist organizations.

At the program following the picket line in Chicago, Iosbaker reported that 25 FBI agents searched his house from top to bottom for 12 hours. Jim Fennerty, the National Lawyers Guild attorney representing Abudayyeh, spoke, as did Andy Thayer, a leader of the Chicago Coalition Against War and Racism; and Kristen Szremski, representing American Muslims for Palestine.

"We are deeply concerned at the FBI's violation of first amendment rights of freedom of speech and assembly," Szremski said. "We urge you to stand strong. We can't allow this to scare us."

Jorge Mújica, a leader of the immigrant rights movement, said he was visited by FBI agents following the 2006 May Day march. "They asked me why I wanted to change U.S. policy," he said. "We are not terrorists—we only want real change, not what we're getting from Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C."

Other speakers included Hatem

Galal, president of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; Stan Willis, of the National Conference of Black Lawyers; John Beacham, of the ANSWER Coalition; Shaun Harkin, International Socialist Organization, and Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate.

According to the warrant issued to Mick Kelly, a union cafeteria worker at the University of Minnesota, the FBI was granted the powers to gather evidence related to people "providing, attempting and conspiring to provide material support" to terrorist organizations. The warrant listed Hezbollah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), according to Ted Dooley, Kelly's attorney. The warrant also allowed the FBI to gather information connected to the Freedom Road Socialist Organization.

Kelly is editor of *FightBack!*, a Minneapolis-based newspaper and Web site and a leader of the Anti-War Committee, also based in Minneapolis.

American Indian Movement leaders Clyde Bellecourt and Bill Means joined the Minneapolis protest.

Frank Forrestal in Minneapolis contributed to this article.

### FOR FURTHER READING



**Cointelpro:**  
**The FBI's Secret War**  
**on Political Freedom**  
by Nelson Blackstock

Describes decades-long covert counterintelligence program—Cointelpro—directed against socialists and activists in the Black and anti-Vietnam War movements.

\$15

### FBI on Trial

**The Victory in the**  
**Socialist Workers**  
**Party Suit Against**  
**Government Spying**  
by Margaret Jayko

Record of 1987 victory in 14-year SWP legal battle against FBI, CIA, and other government spy agencies. \$20

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# Social conquests of the struggle for Black rights

*This week we continue our installments from the recently published book Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power, by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. Below is an excerpt from the chapter titled “The Cosmopolitan ‘Meritocracy’ and the Changing Class Structure of the Black Nationality.” Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

BY JACK BARNES

One of the most important conquests of the mass, proletarian-led struggle for Black rights in the 1950s and 1960s was the substantial *extension* of workers’ social wage that had been won as a by-product of working-class battles that built the industrial unions in the 1930s. As a direct result of the movement that brought down Jim Crow and the urban uprisings that turned the country and the confidence of the ruling class upside down, Medicare and Medicaid were won in 1965. And in 1972—thirty-five years after the original Social Security legislation—the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program for the blind, disabled, and elderly was established.

The Social Security Act of 1935 had included small retirement supplements for many workers, federally mandated unemployment insurance and workers compensation, and aid for dependent children (paid to eligible mothers). It’s important to remember that this legislation had been crafted by the Roosevelt administration to serve the needs of capital by *limiting* concessions as much as possible. For example, not only were retirement benefits financed in part by a payroll tax on workers (a regressive, anti-working-class measure), but the minimal sums paid out were meant only as a minor supplement to whatever workers were able to put aside for old age (usually nothing) or get from their adult sons and daughters.

What’s more, since average life expectancy in 1935 was below sixty-two, and just below sixty for men,

the anticipated government payout on pension benefits beginning at age sixty-five would be small—in fact, in close to a majority of cases, nary a penny!

Social Security payments were not intended to defend and strengthen the working class. They returned to workers no more than a token of the wealth produced by our social labor. Social Security was aimed at bolstering the responsibility of the petty-bourgeois family for meeting the needs of the young, the elderly, the disabled, and the ill, including reinforcing the social norm that the place of working-class women with dependent children was in the home. (I say working-class women, because the bourgeois family has always hired or retained a phalanx of wet nurses, nannies, tutors, and even dog-walkers—in the latter case, the comical twenty-first century surrogate for the old bourgeois stable staff.)

All sanctimonious prattle by the capitalist rulers and their spokespersons about “defending the working-class family” serves only to obfuscate bourgeois social relations in order to absolve the propertied ruling families and their government institutions of *social* responsibility for food and clothing, education, health care, housing, transportation, and more. It is the banner under which these responsibilities are pressed on individual workers—that is, primarily on women.

It is these capitalist property relations that are the root of so much individual and “family” misery today. Only when they are uprooted through revolutionary action by the working classes ourselves, only when economic compulsion—the wages system, the “cash nexus”—ceases to be the foundation of all social interaction, will new human relations eventually emerge. We cannot even begin to imagine what those relations will be, but the one thing we *can* be sure of is that they will have little in common with the petty-bourgeois family of today, much less the propertied family of the capitalist class.\*

Working people have a vital stake



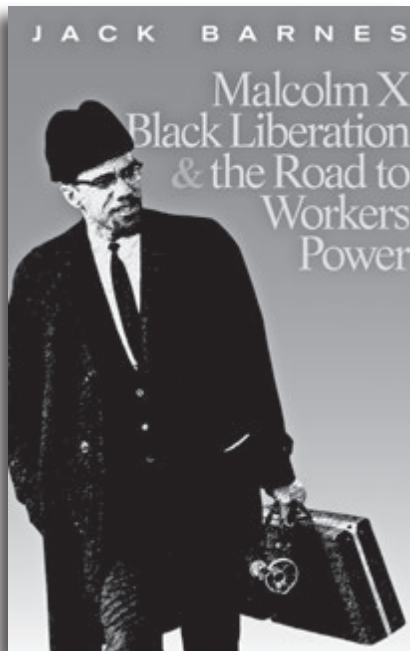
**Top:** Striking sanitation workers march in Memphis, Tennessee, March 29, 1968, in fight against racist discrimination, for safety on job, and better working conditions. **Above:** Some of 20,000 jobless World War I veterans in July 1932 camped near U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., fight off cop assault. “One of the most important conquests of the mass, proletarian-led struggle for Black rights in the 1950s and ‘60s was the substantial extension of workers’ social wage, won as a by-product of working-class battles that built industrial unions in 1930s,” said Barnes.

not only in defending the social wage we’ve fought for and won, but above all in building a mass social and political movement of the working class *to extend these conquests as universal rights*—not means-tested charity—for

*all*. Through our labor, the working class, in this country and worldwide, produces more than enough wealth to provide education, health care, housing, and retirement to every human being on earth, for a lifetime.

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listed on page 10. (Include \$3 for  
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\* Contrary to the self-interested claims of capitalist ideologues, there is no such thing as the “working-class family.” The word *family* is derived from the Latin *familia*, meaning the totality of household slaves that are the property of one man. From the origins of class society, the primary function of the family has been to preserve the accumulated wealth and private property of the ruling class—whether cattle, slaves, and estates, or capital in land, mines, mills, and factories—and assure its orderly transfer from generation to generation.

Today’s counterpart of this institution among the propertyless working masses (also, and confusingly, known in everyday speech as a “family”) is descended from the petty-bourgeois family of the peasantry—a productive unit in which every man, woman, and child of all generations labored under the father’s domination to provide the necessities of life. The survival of individual members of this production unit depended on the mutual contributions of all.

With the rise of industrial capitalism, a hereditary proletariat was born through the forcible dispossession of the peasantry from the land. Members of the previously productive peasant family—children and women first of all—were now forced to sell their labor power individually on the market to a capitalist employer, with all the brutality and suffering that produced. In the process, the petty-bourgeois family was ripped asunder. In *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, published

in 1845, the young Frederick Engels, with great eloquence and compassion, described the horrendous consequences of this dispossession and proletarianization as it occurred there, and then across Western Europe.

The working class everywhere organized and fought to curb the degree of that exploitation, demanding a shorter workday, curtailment of child labor, higher wages, and legislation to regulate factory conditions. Meanwhile, armies of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois reformers set out to reimpose on the toilers as individuals, and on women first and foremost, the responsibility for reproducing and maintaining the working class, including those too young, too old, or too sick to sell their labor power. The concrete complexities of this historical transition from precapitalist to capitalist property and social relations have differed from one part of the world to another. But the modern form of the petty-bourgeois family is today as universally recognizable to the factory worker in Shanghai as it is to his or her fellow worker in Manchester, Atlanta, Cairo, Johannesburg, or Mexico City.

For a further discussion of the emergence of the family in class society, see “Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women’s Liberation” by Mary-Alice Waters, resolution adopted by the Socialist Workers Party national convention (August 1979), in Mary-Alice Waters (ed.), *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women’s Liberation*, Part I (Pathfinder, 1992).



# Women’s liberation and the Cuban Revolution

Panel presentation held at library in Atlanta

BY JACOB PERASSO

ATLANTA—The Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History sponsored a panel discussion here September 25 on the book *Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women’s Platoon in Cuba’s Revolutionary War 1956–58*. The book is based on an extensive interview with Puebla, who is today a brigadier general and the highest-ranking woman in Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces.

The panel included Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, who interviewed Puebla and edited the book; Eleanor Hunter, a librarian at the research library; Bahati Kuumba, associate director of the Spelman College Women’s Resource and Research Center; and Preston Goins, a senior at Georgia State University majoring in Spanish and history.

The Saturday afternoon program began with a showing of *With Our Memory on the Future*, a documentary film produced in 2005 on the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC). The video focuses on women in Cuban society and the advances that have been made since the revolution. In the film, those being interviewed express a wide range of views about sexual relations, divorce, a father’s role in child rearing and housework, women working outside the home, and other questions. Watching the movie gave many in the audience an introduction to questions that would be discussed during the *Marianas in Combat* program.

Abayomi Manrique, a library associate at the Auburn Avenue center, welcomed the nearly 60 people in attendance on behalf of the library and program department. He called special attention to a table with a wide range of books by Pathfinder about the Cuban Revolution and revolutionary politics.

Hunter, who chaired the panel, recounted how Puebla was a 15-year-old teenager when the vicious brutalities of the Batista tyranny led her to throw herself into a great historical movement. She dropped her studies, joined the July 26th Movement, and eventually joined the fighters in the Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra mountains of Eastern Cuba. In 1958 she became the second in command of the Mariana Grajales Women’s Platoon, and had earned the rank of lieutenant by the time of the tri-

umph of the revolution in 1959.

Hunter pointed to several examples that showed the social goals—the morality—of the Cuban Revolution and its leadership, describing how Fidel Castro fought for full participation of women in the revolution. She noted Puebla’s explanation of how the new government cared for and educated the children of those who supported the revolution as well as those who opposed it. She mentioned the special schools that were established to train women who had been prostitutes for productive jobs.

### Internationalist mission in Angola

Hunter said that for those who fought in internationalist missions, like in Angola where Cuban combatants helped defeat the apartheid forces of South Africa, the only thing the Cubans ever took home when they left was their dead.

Bahati Kuumba talked about “the revolution within the Cuban Revolution” that has changed the lives of millions of Cuban women. It’s an unfinished revolution, she noted, because patriarchy and sexism still exist. “Socialism is necessary but not sufficient,” she said. “Even after winning access to child care and health care, there is still work to be done. They have eliminated the institutional basis for sexism, but it’s not yet eradicated.”

Kuumba cited a quote from Karl Marx found in Waters’s introduction to the *Marianas* book that she said exemplifies what the Cuban Revolution represents: “The change in a historical epoch can always be determined by the progress of women toward freedom. . . . The degree of emancipation of woman is the natural measure of general emancipation.”

Goins said he first learned about *Marianas in Combat* through a footnote in a book titled *The Revolution Question: Feminisms in El Salvador, Chile, and Cuba*, by Julie D. Shayne. “I found the *Marianas* book in the library and spent the whole afternoon reading it. I could not put the book down,” he said.

Goins deplored the lack of objective reading material available about the Cuban Revolution, saying most of what he found in the Georgia State University library are counterrevolutionary books “with dime store titles from the first years after the revolution.”

The *Marianas* book “opened my eyes. All other armed conflict that I



Militant/Maceo Dixon

Panel at September 25 program on Pathfinder book *Marianas in Combat* held at Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History in Atlanta. From left to right: Eleanor Hunter, library associate; Bahati Kuumba, Spelman College professor; Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press; Preston Goins, Georgia State University student.

knew about involved the working class fighting for the ruling class,” Goins said. “I learned that the Cuban revolution was not just about what Fidel, Raúl [Castro] and Che [Guevara] did in the mountains, but about the mass popular support in the cities.”

Waters described how she first met Teté Puebla in the home of Puebla’s neighbor, Gen. Harry Villegas, known as “Pombo,” who had fought at the side of Guevara in Cuba, the Congo, and Bolivia. Puebla unexpectedly turned up at the door dressed for doing her household chores. “Her down-to-earth qualities, the lack of pretension, were delightful,” Waters said. “Even more important, she exemplified the ordinary women and men who made the Cuban Revolution, who make any genuine revolution.”

### ‘Not willing to live on their knees’

“Puebla is an example of the millions in Cuba who are not willing to live on their knees,” Waters added.

Waters compared the revolutionary capacities of working people in Cuba to those of the seasoned working-class fighters and youth of the civil rights movement that brought down Jim Crow segregation in the United States. “It was those two struggles,” she said, “that convinced me that revolution in the United States was not only necessary, but possible.”

“The workers and peasants of Cuba didn’t set out to make a socialist revolution, but to close the gap between the insanely rich and the desperately poor,” said Waters. “It was the first free territory of the Americas, and it still is. They refuse to bow down to Washington.

“It’s why the Cuban Five have been held hostage for 12 years. Because the Cuban people refuse to change as the U.S. rulers demand,” Waters said, referring to five Cuban political prisoners held in U.S. jails for the “crime” of gathering information on counterrevolutionary organizations in south Florida with a record of violent attacks against Cuba.

Waters noted that “no revolution in history has had the number of women who were political leaders of the struggle that the Cuban Revolution has. This has to do with the political clarity of the leadership, and Fidel Castro above all. But it was the objective changes over the last century of struggles that made it possible. For example, in 1917 very few women were part of the leadership of the October Revolution in Russia. In future revolutions women will be an even bigger part of the leadership.”

In the documentary film, a reference

was made to the fact that there was no retreat on women’s emancipation during the Special Period in Cuba—the years of extreme economic hardship beginning in the early 1990s following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the supposedly socialist regimes of Eastern Europe, which had accounted for 85 percent of Cuba’s foreign trade.

“The FMC led the fight to defend what women have gained in the revolution,” said Waters. “A few leaders and economists at the time advocated that women should be laid off before men and obligated to return to the home as a solution to the economic scarcities. The debate ended when a leader of the FMC asked, ‘What army do you intend to use to implement this policy?’”

During the discussion period a participant asked, “How does the leadership of Cuban women relate to the internationalist brigades? Was there opposition from colonial powers or the ruling classes of various countries [aided by Cuban internationalists] to the role of women in those brigades?”

“Women participated in the international brigades from the first mission in 1963 in Algeria. Cuban women fought in Angola in a women’s anti-aircraft brigade,” Waters said. “Today, Cuban doctors in Equatorial Guinea, many of them women, are helping to set up the medical system in that country, she added. Waters explained prejudices against women on the international brigades exist, but they break down over time because of what the women accomplish.

One member of the audience, who

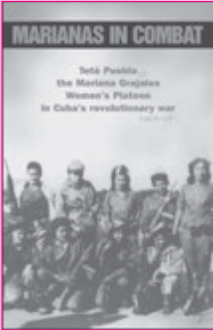
Continued on 9



Militant/Maceo Dixon

Audience at September 25 panel discussion on *Marianas in Combat* at library in Atlanta

Available from PathfinderPress.



**Ma**  
**Teté Puebla and the**  
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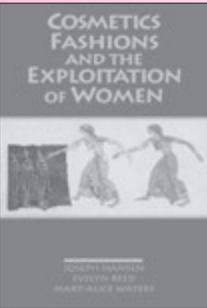
The highest-ranking woman in the Cuban Revolution, General Teté Puebla joined the fight against the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1956 and how the nearly 50-year struggle of women in Cuba has been

\$14

**Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women**

How big business plays on women’s insecurities to market cosmetics and rake in profits.

In her introduction Mary-Alice Waters assesses the political consequences of changes in women’s social conditions since World War II, especially their increasing incorporation into industrial jobs and trade unions.



\$15



# Spelman students discuss cosmetics and exploitation

BY LISA POTASH

ATLANTA—A lively exchange followed two presentations by Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, to students in the comparative women's studies program at Spelman, an historically Black women's college here.

Bahati Kuumba, associate professor of Women's Studies at Spelman, invited Waters to speak about the Cuban Revolution, socialism, and women's liberation to some 50 students in her introductory class on women's oppression. Immediately afterward, Kuumba invited Waters to give a presentation on Pathfinder's book *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* to her class on Black women and their bodies. Initially planned as a 15-minute presentation and brief discussion, the class turned into an hour-long exchange on the struggle for women's emancipation.

In both classes Waters explained that because the oppression of women was inseparable from the rise of private property and class-divided society some 10,000 years ago and remains indispensable to capitalism today, its eradication can only be achieved through revolutionary struggle by the working class with women playing a leading role.

Waters pointed to the social advances for women and blacks in Cuba following the 1959 revolutionary victory that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship there and brought Cuba's workers and farmers to power. "Social relations, not biology or 'human nature,' are the source of women's second-class status and social relations can be completely transformed. The social solidarity of the working class, not the dog-eat-dog foundation of capitalism, is what marks socialism," Waters said.

A flurry of questions and comments ensued. What is socialism, and is Obama a socialist? Isn't it "fair" that doctors get paid a lot more? After all, look at how long they have to go to school. If capitalism opened the door to integrating women into social produc-

tion outside the family, is there more upward mobility for minority women under capitalism or socialism?

One young woman recounted that as an exchange student in Brazil she met young Brazilian doctors trained in Cuba who were not allowed to practice medicine in Brazil. Cuba has trained tens of thousands of doctors from around the world free of charge, with one and only one commitment: that they return home after they graduate in order to provide medical care in communities where they are most needed.

Waters explained that in many countries, including the United States, it is the professional medical societies that refuse to recognize Cuban degrees because Cuban doctors treat patients free of charge.

"Haven't people in different countries tried socialism and communism and rejected them because they don't work?" one student asked.

"We live under capitalism," said another. "You're going to have to change people's minds. How will you do that?"

Waters pointed to the "inevitable resistance we will all be part of" in response to the conditions being imposed on working people by the deepening crisis of capitalism. It's through such struggles themselves, Waters explained, as in Cuba, that the exploited and oppressed begin to transform themselves as they see the revolutionary transformation of society as the only realistic solution.

"From our perspective, being raised in a capitalist society, capitalism 'works,'" Lexi Smith, a member of the campus Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance, said during the discussion. "But in terms of the equality we all actually deserve, it hasn't provided the answer."

Discussion in the second class followed a presentation on *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, a book that explains how capitalism plays on the second-class status of women and their social insecurities to market cosmetics and rake in profits.

Waters's remarks touched a nerve and elicited a range of pertinent comments and questions from students.

"When I was in high school, I wouldn't go out of the house without makeup," said 19-year-old Samantha Russell-Porte. "Now that I'm older, I don't feel like I have to do that anymore and hardly ever use anything but soap and water."

"Why is it my family and relatives, not white people, who pressure me to use skin bleaches and straighten my hair?" asked another student.

Participants also discussed how many older women are obligated to dye their hair to increase their chances of getting a job, and the firing of a Black woman by Six Flags amusement park for wearing her hair in dreadlocks.

Waters explained that these are exactly the questions debated in *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* and why the fight for women's equality is a class question, not just an



Militant/Rachele Fruit

Women's studies class at Spelman College in Atlanta listens to Mary-Alice Waters speak on "Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women" September 23. "Social relations, not biology or 'human nature,' are the source of women's second-class status," Waters said.

issue of concern to women. She quoted from the article "The woman question and the Marxist method" by Evelyn Reed, which is in the book: "Beauty has no identity with fashions. But it has an identity with labor. Apart from the realm of nature, all that is beautiful has been produced in labor and by the laborers."

Two days later Professor Kuumba joined Waters and others in a panel

discussion on *Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War 1956-58*, published by Pathfinder Press, at the Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History here. The book is assigned reading in Kuumba's class on "Women and Social Resistance." (See article on facing page.)



Courtesy Teté Puebla

Fidel Castro, center, with members of Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon Oct. 8, 1958, as they were leaving on combat mission. On Castro's right is Teté Puebla, subject of *Marianas in Combat* and today brigadier general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces. "No revolution in history has had the number of women who were political leaders of the struggle that the Cuban Revolution has," Mary-Alice Waters told participants at Atlanta library discussion on book. "This has to do with the political clarity of the leadership, and Fidel Castro above all."

## Panel presentation in Atlanta

Continued from page 8

had grown up in Guatemala, explained how the government there in the 1980s used brutal repression against the workers and peasants to crush forces trying to emulate the Cuban Revolution. This included the murder of her father. She asked if Waters saw violence against women as aimed primarily at intimidating women or society as a whole.

Waters said that violence against women has been a key aspect of their oppression through millennia. "The fight against it is an important part of the battle for women's liberation and to prevent the rulers from dividing working people along lines of gender and race."

Another question was asked by panelist Eleanor Hunter about the Ana Betancourt schools in Cuba. Waters

explained that the new revolutionary government that took power in 1959 organized to bring women from peasant families into Havana to attend these schools, which were named after a combatant from the country's independence war of 1868. There they learned basic sewing skills and received other training so they could make an economic contribution independent of their family responsibilities, gaining confidence and self-respect. "The FMC led the battle to persuade women to come to the schools and to convince their families to support them doing so," she said.

Following the formal program many stayed to expand the discussion. When the library doors closed, they moved to a restaurant down the block to continue for a couple of hours more.

com

### Marianas in Combat

*The Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon Revolutionary War 1956-58*

nan in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, Brigadier the struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictator- a 1956, when she was 15 years old. This is her story struggle to transform the social and economic status n inseparable from the country's socialist revolution.

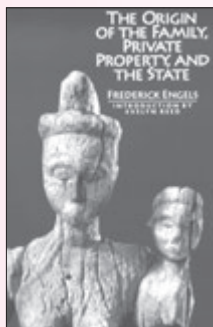
Also available in Spanish and Farsi.

### Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State

Frederick Engels explains that the family, private property, and the state—the basic institutions of capitalist society—are neither "natural" nor everlasting.

He shows how oppression of women as a sex begins with the development of private property, and how the development of the modern working class creates the material basis to end that oppression.

\$18





# Why socialist revolution in the U.S. is possible

*Below is an excerpt from Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?—A Necessary Debate. The Spanish edition is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for October. The short book contains two talks by Mary-Alice Waters on this topic as part of a wide-ranging debate at the annual Venezuela book fairs in 2007 and 2008. Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and president of Pathfinder Press, explains why a socialist revolution is not only possible but that revolutionary struggles by working people are inevitable, forced upon them by the employing class's crisis-driven assaults on their living standards and job conditions—on their humanity. Copyright © 2008 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

### BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

What seemingly started as a capitalist crisis centered in credit and banking has now been revealed to be something of a very different dimension. As the de facto bankruptcy of General Motors bears witness, the deepest contraction of industrial production and employment since the opening decades of the last century is accelerating dramatically. And the inevitability of such a contraction has underlaid this worldwide crisis from the beginning.



Workers' families confront immigration agents after raid on Swift meat processing plant in Greeley, Colorado, December 2006. "We have already seen the opening skirmishes of a fighting vanguard of the working class emerging in the United States," said Waters.

It is worth reminding ourselves that the Great Depression of the 1930s was not the consequence of the stock market crash of 1929 and subsequent banking crises alone. Its roots are found in the violently intensifying competition among capitalist powers in the years leading up to World War I—for colonial possessions, access to markets and raw materials, and inexpensive sources of labor to exploit—and the economic and social breakdowns and financial catastrophe that accompanied that interimperialist slaughter and its aftermath. And it took the global carnage of the Second World War, including its massive physical destruction of capital across Europe and Asia from 1939 to 1945, to lay the basis for the exploiting classes to pull out of that crisis.

That is important. As Lenin stressed, there is no hopeless situation for capitalism. The two decades from 1930 to 1950 showed once again that the finance capitalists, if they are not stopped beforehand, can dig themselves out of any crisis—by inflicting enough bloody defeats on the working classes and destroying enough of the world's existing industrial capacity.

The only question is the price the toilers will be made to pay.

The only solution is taking the power to inflict these horrors—state power—out of their hands, once and for all.

Is that possible? That is, after all, the

question we posed a year ago. And we made the point that revolutionary struggles by the toilers are not only inevitable, they will be initiated at first not by us, "but forced upon us by the crisis-driven assaults of the propertied classes."

The working class in massive numbers never enters on the road of revolutionary struggle lightly, or all at once. Workers sense the stakes, the sacrifices it will entail, the uncertainty. Our class in its majority exhausts other alternatives first, including alternatives to communist political leadership. . . .

Even before the new stage of the global retrenchment that is now accelerating, however, we have already seen, already been part of, the opening skirmishes of a fighting vanguard of the working class emerging in the United States. We saw this vanguard-in-becoming as millions of workers took to the streets of cities and towns across the country in 2006 and 2007 to demand the legalization of some 12 million immigrants whose documents the U.S. government does not recognize. They retook May Day as a fighting holiday of the working class.

We saw it earlier this year in the defiant response of workers across the Midwest—both immigrant and U.S.-born—to police raids on factories and homes, the roundups and deportations of thousands of workers, the criminal charges of "identity theft" brought against hundreds. That fighting response was cap-

tured most dramatically by the women, together with their children, who led the protest marches, proudly displaying the electronic police monitors shackled around their ankles. It was registered by the workers of all nationalities who joined them.

This is a working-class vanguard strengthened by its increasingly international character, by the traditions of struggle being added by workers from around the world to the longtime traditions of working-class battles in the United States itself. This is a working class that is slowly but surely learning in struggle the life-or-death necessity of fighting shoulder to shoulder—as well as how to do so.

The rapidly escalating economic and social crisis has only barely begun to be felt by working people, whether in the United States or internationally. . . .

Our job today is above all a political one. While the class battles ahead of us are inevitable, their outcome is not. That depends on us. On our capacity to unflinchingly face the truth and speak with clarity to fellow combatants, to learn to rely on our own increasing class solidarity and unity in struggle. To understand, and help other vanguard fighters to understand, that the driving force of all history since the dawn of recorded time has been class struggle, not conspiracies. That the poisons of Jew-hatred and racism rob us of our ability to see that the real problem is the capitalist system itself, and that the real enemy we must defeat is the propertied classes whose wealth and power depend on that system.

Working people the world over are in for decades of intertwined economic, military, social, and political crises, and accompanying explosive class battles. The period we are entering will be more akin to the years from the opening of the twentieth century through World War II than to anything any of us have lived through. The one thing we can be sure of is that our side, our class, will have more than one opportunity to alter the course of history in the only way we can—the way the workers and farmers of Cuba did it fifty years ago, and the way the working people of the tsarist empire did it four decades before them.

October

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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The Militant October 11, 2010



# FBI raids aimed at working class

The FBI raids on the homes and offices of anti-war activists and other groups in Minneapolis and Chicago were conducted under the pretext of combating “terrorism.” But it’s no coincidence that they take place amid an unrelenting drive by the bosses and their government to foist the burden of their economic crisis on the backs of working people.

As the capitalist economic crisis deepens and generates working-class resistance, it will become clearer that these attacks on constitutional protections—including the right to free speech and freedom of assembly and the right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure—are aimed at workers and farmers throughout the United States. The capitalist rulers and their police agencies anticipate class battles ahead.

Millions without jobs, speedup and unsafe conditions for those who are working, deteriorating social services, failing health care, along with imperialist wars—these features of the crisis are not the result of mistaken policies, but the inevitable consequence of capitalism in decline.

The propertied rulers want us to believe the lie that there is one America and that we are all in this together. That “we” have to tighten our belts; that “we” need tariffs to compete with other nations to save “American jobs”; that “we” are at war in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq. But *we* are part of an international working class that faces the same enemy: the ruling rich in our respective countries and

the imperialist world order led by Washington.

The labor movement needs to fight for demands that can strengthen the unity and solidarity of our class, protect us from assaults on our living standards, and put us in the strongest position to transform our unions into strong fighting instruments that can wrest concessions, raise workers’ confidence, and be a school for revolutionary politics and action.

The Socialist Workers Party candidates around the country put forward the following demands around which our class can advance through struggle: unemployment insurance for as long as a worker is unemployed; a massive federal public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages building hospitals, schools, housing, mass transit, and other needed infrastructure; and the immediate legalization without restrictions of undocumented workers and an end to deportations so that working people, no matter where they are born, can be in the best position to stand together.

Workers need to break from the Democrats and Republicans and form a labor party, based on a militant union movement, that would be part of leading the fight for these immediate demands and help organize the unorganized.

Along this fighting revolutionary internationalist course working people can wrest political power from the capitalist exploiters—transforming themselves and all of society in the process.

## Washington launches Kandahar assault

**Continued from front page**

west of Kandahar, but few Islamist fighters were killed or captured, said the *Globe and Mail*.

CBS News estimated the number of U.S. troops in the latest Kandahar operation at 8,000, with an even greater number of Afghan soldiers involved. “We expect hard fighting,” said NATO spokesman Brigadier-General Josef Blotz.

Gen. David Petraeus, commander of U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan, said September 27 that some high-level Taliban leaders had responded to Afghan president Hamid Karzai’s call for reconciliation talks. That course is controversial, however, with Afghans who do not belong to the dominant Pashtun nationality, as do Karzai and the Taliban, raising fears of the kind of severe repression they confronted when the Taliban were in power.

Karzai’s ties to corrupt figures in the Afghani ruling class pose another problem for Washington in prosecuting the war. The U.S. National Security Agency has been wiretapping Mahmoud Karzai, the president’s brother, the *New York Times* reported. He has major investments in real estate, cement, and other industries, and is a top investor in Kabul Bank, the country’s largest private financial institution that nearly collapsed recently after its top executives resigned in a “corruption” scandal.

Another Karzai brother, Ahmed Wali Karzai, is chairman of the Kandahar provincial council and widely reputed to have connections to the narcotics trade. “United States officials have said that he also has had a long-standing relationship with the Central Intelligence Agency,” the *Times* reported.

From September 25 to 27, U.S. helicopters launched three waves of attacks on members of the Haqqani network in Pakistan near the Afghan border, in at least one case crossing into Pakistani airspace.

The Pakistani Foreign Ministry said the raids “are a clear violation and breach of the U.N. mandate.”

Washington has also stepped up aerial drone attacks in Pakistan in recent weeks. As of September 29, there have been 20 drone attacks, more than any previous month.

A tribal elder from North Waziristan told the *Washington Post*, “Everyone in our area is living and moving in a state of fear that we might be hit by a missile from the drones hovering around our region.”

Petraeus has urged Pakistani officials to carry out more vigorous attacks on the Haqqani network, a major Afghan Taliban ally that attacks U.S. forces and has bases in North Waziristan. According to the *Times*, Petraeus has threatened to launch unilateral operations against Haqqani fighters on Pakistan soil if Islamabad continues to refuse to do so.

## ‘Stimulus’ failures

**Continued from front page**

of Obama’s top economic advisors, announced September 21 that he will resign at the end of the year. Summers has been a key figure under both Democratic and Republican administrations.

Summers’s departure comes on the heels of the resignations of Christina Romer, who just stepped down as chairperson of the Council of Economic Advisors, and Peter Orszag, head of the Office of Management and Budget.

The Republican Party, while trying to take advantage of discontent over the economic crisis, has no serious plan of its own. An article in the conservative magazine *National Review* titled “Empty Promise,” noted that the Republican’s Pledge to America has no fundamental difference with what the Democrats are carrying out. Instead, the *Review* states that the pledge tells “how you’re going to make Big Government work better.”

Neither Democrats or Republicans, nor the tea party, have a solution to the decades-long decline of capitalism. Tea party groups, which reflect resentment by layers of the middle class and some workers who fear the effects of the economic crisis, say what they are against, but little of what they are for except the “free market.”

The *New York Times* noted that “even after taxpayer bailouts restored bankers’ profits and pay, the great Wall Street money machine is decelerating.”

“Big financial institutions, including commercial banks, are still making a lot of money,” the paper adds. But not as much as they had hoped.

Another indication of Wall Street’s problem is that stock offerings are down 15 percent from last year; the issuing and sale of bonds is down 25 percent.

**Downward rate of industrial profit**

Capitalists only invest if they can make sufficient profit. In response to the downward pressure on the rate of industrial profit over the last several decades, bosses’ investments in production-expanding equipment and plants have declined. Instead, they have sought to maximize their profits through “downsizing” and speedup, and by pouring their money into stocks, bonds, derivatives, and other forms of financial speculation.

The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* notes that U.S. corporations that laid off workers and cut production over the last few years are “stuffing mountains of cash into their bank accounts. But they are not hiring.”

U.S. companies, including Alcoa, Intel, General Electric, IBM, and Exxon, are sitting on more than \$1.8 trillion in cash reserves, up \$382 billion from last year, according to the Federal Reserve.

U.S. government attempts to spur bank lending by keeping interest rates low—the Federal Reserve charges banks less than 1 percent interest—have had little impact. The decline in commercial and industrial loans in the second half of 2009 was the largest in any six-month period since at least World War II. Factories are operating at about 72 percent capacity, some 7 percentage points below the 1972–2009 average.

Government attempts to stimulate demand by offering tax credits for home buyers and other programs have failed to reverse the collapse of the real estate bubble. In Florida alone there are more than half a million foreclosure cases in the courts. Banks around the country are still delaying foreclosures in a doomed attempt to prevent a further drop in prices by keeping homes off the market.

In the midst of the deepening crisis, the capitalist-owned news media sometimes grasp at any figure that could indicate that things are not as bad as they seem.

In mid-September many news outlets announced that credit card debt had declined by \$12 billion in the second quarter, claiming this meant, “We’re charging less, paying down our debt, living within our means.” Credit card “portfolios,” bought and sold on the market like mortgage packages, are profitable for major banks like JPMorgan, Bank of America, and Citigroup.

What the media ignores is that credit card companies wrote off \$21.8 billion of debt as uncollectible; new debts had actually risen by more than \$9 billion.

Working people, facing long-term unemployment and lower wages when they do find jobs, are bearing the brunt of the crisis. In New York City, one in 10 families in public housing are one month or more behind on rent, a 50 percent increase from last year.

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